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Part One:

Millennium Approaches

by Tony Kushner

Director..... Patrick O’Gara

Scenic Design Dan P. Conley *

Lighting Design Erin M. Byrnes

Costume Design Alison Roberts *

Sound Design Patrick M. Leahy

Stage Manager Colleen H. Kenny

*-Master of Fine Arts Candidate

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CAST

(in order of appearance)

Rabbi Isidor Chemelwitz	Kate Jordan	*Æ
Roy M. Cohn	Rhys Lovell	*
Joseph Porter Pitt	David Johnson	
Harper Amaty Pitt	Alexandra Balong	*
Mr. Lies	David B. Causey	
Louis Ironson	Don Smith	
Prior Walter	John Fischer	*
The Voice	Erica Jensen	*
Henry	Kate Jordan	*Æ
Emily	Erica Jensen	*
The Man in the Park	John Fischer	*
Belize	David B. Causey	
Martin Heller	Alexandra Balong	*
Hannah Porter Pitt	Kate Jordan	*Æ
Sister Ella Chapter	Erica Jensen	*
Prior 1	David Johnson	
Prior 2	Rhys Lovell	*
The Eskimo	David Johnson	
The Woman in the Bronx	Erica Jensen	*
Ethel Rosenberg	Kate Jordan	*Æ
The Angel	Erica Jensen	*

* Master of Fine Arts Candidate

Æ Appearing courtesy Actors' Equity Association

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DIRECTOR'S NOTES

Angels in America, Millennium Approaches is a provocative indictment of the American political and moral system in these last years of our dying century. Through theatrical wizardry and acute psychological insight, Tony Kushner tells a story of misused power and failed love. His characters, mostly homosexual men with varying degrees of self-respect and self-hatred, navigate a socio-political world that consumes their strength while it denies their basic being. Mr. Kushner is angry!

This is a comedy/drama written on a vast scale. Though it covers a comparatively brief period of time (October, 1985 to January 1986) it refuses to be limited by either time or space. New York City, the main setting for the play, must share theatrical space with an imagined Antarctica, and the real life character of Roy Cohn must confront the theatricalized ghost of his real life nemesis Ethel Rosenberg... thirty years after her execution for treason. Characters appear and disappear at will in the imagination of others, and an angel provides much of the forward thrust of the drama. What idea is Tony Kushner pursuing with such larger-than life imaginings?

I believe it is mainly political. A Socialist by principle and a Marxist by belief, Tony Kushner is asserting the necessity of a new approach to the very idea of society. To Tony, laissez-faire individualism in the context of immense social and economic disparity is a recipe for failure if not absurdity. As a principled man he is convinced that society (and the economic engine that drives it) must be based on a plan; an idea that allows for diversity, individuality and a shared progress. As a Marxist, he sees this plan as materialist in essence, but as a visionary artist he sees it as mystical and faith driven.

Like Bertolt Brecht, one of his literary and ideological heroes, Kushner adopts the epic style as his model. Each of the many scenes (there are 26 in all) is a playlet in itself. Each one has a dramatic, action-driven core and an idea (part of the larger whole) that illuminates it. Since Kushner wants his audience to re-think the relationship between homosexuality and society

(cont. on next page)

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(from previous page)

and AIDS and the political structure, each of the scenes depicts a clash, a non-synchronicity between two or more ideas of the “right” and “true.” And he also manages to include in his plan for the play a confrontation with the audience’s assumptions about the theatre experience itself. In Act III, Scene 3, Mr. Lies says to Harper: “This is a retreat; a vacuum, its virtue is that it lacks everything; deep freeze for feelings. You can be numb and safe here, that’s what you came for...” Though he is referring to the Antarctica of Harper’s valium-induced imagining, he is also describing poetically the unconscious assumptions of many in the audience about their reasons for being there and their ideas of entertainment in the theatre.

Angels in America is not a simple play. It is complex and large, though it remains, at heart, a play about people...people like you and me; people who struggle to draw meaning from their lives in this modern world where the cathedral of the Age of Faith has been replaced by the corporate headquarters of the Age of Economic Man.

— Patrick O’Gara

A SPECIAL DEDICATION

AIDS is not Them; AIDS is US. It is our brothers and sisters, our husbands and wives, our parents, children, co-workers, neighbors, and friends. It is gay and straight, male and female. It cuts across all ethnicities and economic strata. AIDS has a face. Two of its faces, in particular are very dear to me. My brother, Rick Jordan, and his fiancée, Mary O’Malley, lost their respective battles with AIDS in 1989 and 1996. They spent their last years counseling people living with HIV/AIDS and educating the public about the myths and prejudices surrounding this Syndrome. I am proud of the way they lived and empowered by the courage with which they faced their illness. It is my hope that during intermission you will look at the lobby display, which includes photos of Rick and Mary, and you will be inspired to join me as one of the faces in the fight against AIDS.



—Kate Jordan



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Assistant Stage Manager	M. Brandon Thompson	
Assistant to the Director	Andy Hager	
Properties Master	Janine Vreath	*
Assistant Properties Master	Sarah Borsa	
Assistant Lighting Designer	Verda Beth Heermann	
Master Electrician	Michael J. Latocha	
Assistant Master Electrician	Jared Kosoglad	
Choreographer & Movement Coach	Connie deVeer	
Dialogue Coach	Marian Hampton	
Fight Choreographer	Jason Kaplan	
Wing Consultant	Michael Compton	
Faculty Advisors	John Stark (Scenic)	
	Dan Browder (Lighting)	
	Dan Wilhelm (Costumes)	
	J. William Ruyle (Sound)	

* Master of Fine Arts Candidate

† Society of Stage Directors and Choreographers

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Costume Crew: Crystal Carter, Gina D'Ercoli, Clatie Lou Evans, Lisa M. Gonwa, Antony Q. Hill, Sean Jones, Kelly Klintworth, Mark Larson, Thomas Parmenter, Joyce Parmenter, Lindsay Smiling.

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Pete Guither, Steve Knuth, Sally Leahy, Eastern Illinois University, and Bruce Lang and Arlene Valentine from the McLean County AIDS Task Force.

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The Illinois State Theatre production of *Angels in America* is a participating entry in the American College Theatre Festival.

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Fall Dance Concert

Dec. 9, 10, 11, 12 at 8 pm; Dec. 12 at 2 pm
Allen Theatre

Flyin' West by Pearl Cleage
Feb. 19, 20, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27 at 8 pm
Feb. 21, 28 at 2 pm

The Magic Flute by Mozart
Mar. 26, 30, 31, Apr. 1, 2, 3 at 8 pm
Mar. 28 at 2 pm; March 27 at 7 pm (with reception & dancing)

A Midsummer Night's Dream by William Shakespeare
Apr. 16, 17, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24 at 8 pm
Apr. 18, 25 at 2 pm

Spring Dance Concert
April 30, May 1 at 8 pm; May 2 at 2 pm



Dancing at Lughnasa by Brian Friel
March 18, 19, 20, 21
An Evening of One-Acts and
Arkansaw Bear by Aurand Harris
April 7, 8, 9, 10, 11

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